

**Approved Meeting Minutes of the River Trail Commission
(Towns of Cloverland, St. Germaine and the City of Eagle River)
Oct 14, 2020 4:00 PM
Eagle River City Hall, 525 E. Maple St. Eagle River 54521
Also available via Zoom**

1. **Meeting was called to order** at 4:00 PM by Chairman Jim Swenson. Other RTC board members present were Eagle River City Council Member Ron Kressin , Joe Spitz Town of Cloverland Supervisor. A quorum of 3 of 3 commission members was present for the meeting.
2. **Pledge of Allegiance** was recited
3. **Verification of posting** was confirmed
4. **Roll call** was completed. Great Head Waters Trail Members present included: Carlton Schroeder, Tim Wright*, Jeff Currie *, Gary Meister* , Kim Genich* , Terry ?*, Mike?*, Jim Meiers*, Anne Morrissey* . Citizens present included: Joe Laux – Eagle River City Administrator, Francine Gough -Cloverland Town Supervisor, and Steve Favorite, Holly Tomlavitch* , David Ullrich* . (* Zoom Attendees)
5. **Approval to accept agenda in any order** at Chairman’s discretion was accepted.
6. **August 18, 2020 meeting minutes** were distributed and approved.
7. **Commission Business and Concerns –**
 - a. Easements and Permits- Carlton Schroeder discussed that of the 22 easements required all but ~6 property owners have been contacted by himself, Steve Favorite and other GHT members. There are several how have signed the Letter of Understanding regarding their property. Joe Laux said that once the easements are in place, he suggested that they bring them to the city council for approval and acceptance of the by the city council to hold the easements. This is preferred based on his experience with the Three Eagle trail so that the easement can be associated right away with the property so that they don’t have to go back and redo it in the event that the property changes hands or other situations come up. Joe Laux also mentioned that the DOT has the say so of things going on within 600’ of their right of way. The city will need their approval to not have to shovel snow on these right of ways on these properties so this needs to be covered for properties in the City of Eagle River it needs to be on the easement/deed. This is not the case for Towns e.g. Lincoln and Cloverland and St. Germain as DOT doesn’t require Towns to do this.
 - b. Town of Lincoln Involvement - Getting Town of Lincoln involved to acquire the easements within their town isn’t probably going to happen in Joe’s opinion due to a previous issue between the town and the state DOT along Hwy 45, north of Pleasure Island road, regarding highway street lighting that was turned off by the town. When Lincoln stopped the electricity to reduce their costs, the state DOT told them they had to remove the lights. Lincoln refused. The state did it and is now filed a lawsuit to try and recover the \$50,000 cost of removing the lights. The approval of the easements by DOT, will require a SMA (State-Municipality Agreement) which will describe the terms of the permission. The new version SMA’s allow the State DOT in such situations of non-performance by the municipality of terms of the SMA, to address the non-performance themselves, and remove the required funds directly from the municipalities state road aid funding account. A new SMA for Lincoln would allow the DOT to recover the previous issue on Hwy 45 funds. Fortunately, the City of Eagle River has a legal opinion that either they or an adjacent Town to Lincoln (Cloverland) can hold the easements in Lincoln related properties that the trail would pass through. Steve Favorite suggested that this issue needs to be settled so that the property owners can be told who will hold their easement before it is signed. Joe Laux suggested that a “meets and bounds” description be the approach for preparing easements to accelerate the preparation and execution of the private property easements. He will try to get this on the agenda for the city council meeting in November. Joe Spitz will carry the question regarding Cloverland holding Lincoln easements to the next town board meeting in November.
8. **GHT Reports and Recommendations**

Steve Favorite presented a draft of a possible format for the maintenance (attached). This will be presented to the various parties for discussion by the towns/Eagle River to gather input and pose questions regarding progressing the question of maintenance and funding as is required as part of the commission’s charge.

Regarding the fundraising, GHT reported that they had 174 registered participants in the “virtual Septimber Ride event” this year which is encouraging

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9. Letters and communications - None

10. Public Comments – Joe Spitz suggested that while the focus currently is with the Eagle River end of the trail, it might be a good idea to think about the many land owners along the DOT right of way that the balance of the trail is proposed to go through. Even though it would pass within the DOT right of way, it still goes across their property boundaries and they might object and cause future complications or delays. By beginning to enlist their enthusiasm for the project early in the process so they don't feel like it is being forced on them by DOT.

11. Next meeting date set for 1/13/2021 at 4:00 PM at Eagle River City Hall.

12. Meeting adjourned at 5:07 PM

River Trail Commission Trail Maintenance and Enhancement Plan

revised Draft 10/12/2020

OVERVIEW

The River Trail Commission has worked with GHT to form the Friends of the River Trail (FORT) group including citizen volunteers to create a trail maintenance and enhancement plan. This plan addresses trail amenities, maintenance and associated costs. FORT members shall take an active role in carrying out this plan, also recommending plan modifications and additions as needed to the Commission. Mutual agreement for maintenance shall be made with any other user group that shares a portion of the River Trail.

SPRING CLEANUP

FORT shall remove debris from the trail in the spring and trim any branches as needed. The use of blowers and sweepers may be needed to remove debris. If necessary, these services may need to be contracted out. The Municipality shall inspect the trail and provide any additional cleanup necessary for safe walking and biking.

ONGOING INSPECTIONS

FORT shall periodically ride the trails in the summer and report anything to the municipality that may need attention.

MAINTENANCE FUND

A maintenance fund for the short and long term needs of the trail shall be established and operated by the Commission. The maintenance fund shall include but not limited to repair & replacement of the trail as needed. The trail lengths within each municipality shall be used to prorate the cost of maintenance to each municipality unless an easement or any other agreement with a landowner states otherwise.

Each municipality shall pledge funds annually for maintenance through the budget process. GHT shall pledge funds annually for maintenance through fundraising activities and donations.

PROPOSED BUDGET

Note: The estimated cost per mile is based on 5 years of data provided by Boulder Junction Bike Trails UpShift Group

MUNICIPALITY	TRAIL LENGTH	COST/MILE	EXPENSE
City of Eagle River	0.85 miles	@ \$411/mi.	= \$ 349.00
Town of Lincoln	2.05 miles	@ \$411/mi.	= \$ 842.00
Town of Cloverland	6.13 miles	@ \$411/mi.	= \$2,519.00
Town of St. Germain	0.80 miles	@ \$411/mi.	= \$ 328.00
Total	9.83 miles	@ \$411/mi.	= \$4,040.00

MUNICIPALITY	REVENUE
City of Eagle River	_____
Town of Lincoln	_____
Town of Cloverland	_____
Town of St. Germain	_____
GHT	_____
Total	\$4,040.00